



A study of Nonviolent Communication of Chinese School Teachers in Bangkok

Natsha Srihata* and Patreeya Kitcharoen

Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mahidol University, Nakhon Pathom, Thailand

*Corresponding author, E-mail: alexisnatsha@yahoo.com

Abstract

The purposes of this study were (1) to study the levels of nonviolent communication of Chinese school teachers in Bangkok, Thailand and (2) to compare the levels of nonviolent communication of Chinese school teachers in Bangkok based on teachers' nationality. The sample consisted of 384 Chinese school teachers in Bangkok. The data were collected by using a questionnaire and analyzed with descriptive statistics and one-way ANOVA analysis. Overall, the nonviolent communication of Chinese school teachers in Bangkok, Thailand was at the highest level. By comparing the levels of nonviolent communication of Chinese school teachers in Bangkok based on teachers' nationality, the results revealed that there was a statistically significant difference among nationalities ($F(3, 380) = 6.75, p = .00$).

Keywords: *Nonviolent Communication, Compassionate Communication, Empathic Communication, Communication, Chinese School*

1. Introduction

Nonviolent Communication (NVC) is also known as compassionate communication. Nonviolent communication was developed in the 1960s by Rosenberg, who is a psychologist, educator, and global conflict mediator. Nonviolent communication has been proposed as a useful communication tool in various settings and with various populations globally, including its use in primary and secondary schools for a conflict resolution and partnership learning communities in education, because it was proposed to be well aligned with humanizing practices and doctrine of the clergy, in theological education (Nosek, Gifford, & Kober, 2014).

Koschman (2012) emphasized the importance of communication to any institutions to function and operate successfully. Educational institutions such as Chinese schools need to be more aggressive in improving their communication as one of the professional competencies for teachers. Communication is the basis for all forms of cooperation and collaboration (Museux et al., 2016). The effective internal communication plays a vital role in creating trust amongst the employees of an organization (Men & Stacks, 2014).

A specific communication tool that might help Chinese school teachers, particularly in Bangkok is Nonviolent Communication (NVC). The NVC tool was designed by Eckstein and La Grassa (2005), which aims to promote the connection between ourselves and others, by focusing on the needs that motivate our behaviour and communication. A four-step process aids teachers and practitioners in doing so: (1) to observe without evaluation, (2) to identify feelings, (3) to identify underlying needs, and (4) to formulate a request that might help in fulfilling those needs. These four-steps can be applied to connect with one's own needs internally (self-connection), to communicate one's own needs (expressing) and/or to listen to the needs of others (listening).

Developing the teaching education in Chinese schools, for instance, is centred on the intention that educating the youth more efficiently and effectively can make the world a better place. Kincheloe (2008) theorized that developing teaching education is committed to improving the grief of the people by setting corrective education in the societal environments for teachers-educators and learners. The Theory of Kincheloe (2008) means that teaching education is more concerned with how to end all forms of discrimination, oppression, poverty and other social issues faced in modern times but maintaining a compassionate, collaborative and nonviolent communication.

Currently, there are twenty-two Chinese schools which are allied to the Office of the Private Education Commission under the Ministry of Education. All of these associations have the same prominent

[1663]



aim to educate their children Chinese language. These Chinese schools are offering pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, primary and secondary education.

Chinese schools in Bangkok have a diverse culture. Students, teachers, staff and administrators come from various locations; Canada, the United States, European countries and neighboring Asian countries. Delivering better learning in this type of educational environment poses a great challenge for teachers-educators and academic leaders. Professional development, particularly in the aspect of communicative competence, is the key to addressing this issue. However, the burning question is how we plan and implement professional development to teachers-educators to change learners to enhance the level of nonviolent communication, specifically to Chinese school teachers. Since there are several teachers from different background, a problem in communication occurs that leads to a serious problem nearby the consistency of turnover. Problems on adjustment to a new environment are the challenge of the school to manage its staff.

In this research, the nonviolent communication (NVC) is the focused concern and well guided by the above discussion and considering not many research available on the use of NVC in organizations and its effects on internal communication, let alone the organization as a system; the researcher is inspired to determine the levels of nonviolent communication between teachers and his/her colleagues among teachers in Chinese schools in Bangkok. Besides, to compare the levels of nonviolent communication of Chinese school teachers in Bangkok based on teachers' nationality. The Chinese school administrators in Bangkok would have information to concern the current situations of levels of nonviolent communication of Chinese school teachers in Bangkok, Thailand. The findings from this study can be used to support managerial decisions in enhancing nonviolent communication of Chinese school teachers in Bangkok, Thailand. Moreover, the school administrators and the human resource department in Chinese schools in Bangkok could apply the information to be used in their management and to strengthen their teachers' capability appropriately.

2. Objectives

2.1 To study the levels of nonviolent communication of Chinese school teachers in Bangkok, Thailand.

2.2 To compare the levels of nonviolent communication of Chinese school teachers in Bangkok based on teachers' nationality.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1 Materials

1) Concepts of nonviolent communication

According to Eckstein and Grassa (2005), nonviolent communication includes eight non-threatening components; respect, honesty, parenting together, equal responsibility, economic partners, fairness, and trust. Because this study focused on nonviolent communication between teachers and colleagues, it was necessary to develop one component (parenting together). Then, the component "parenting together" was developed and transformed into "working together". Moreover, one component (economic partners) was excluded. Therefore, this study employed seven components of nonviolent communication which are non-threatening, respect, honesty, working together, equal responsibility, fairness, and trust.

2) A comparison of the levels of nonviolent communication

Based on Merchant (2012), Lackoff (1973), Thorne and Henley (1975), and Beck (2005), there was a difference in the levels of nonviolent communication among personal background. Thus, there is a statistical difference between the levels of nonviolent communication of Chinese school teachers in Bangkok based on teachers' personal background. This study aimed to compare the levels of nonviolent communication of Chinese school teachers in Bangkok based on teachers' nationality.

The conceptual framework of this study identifying components of nonviolent communication and a research hypothesis is presented in Figure 1.

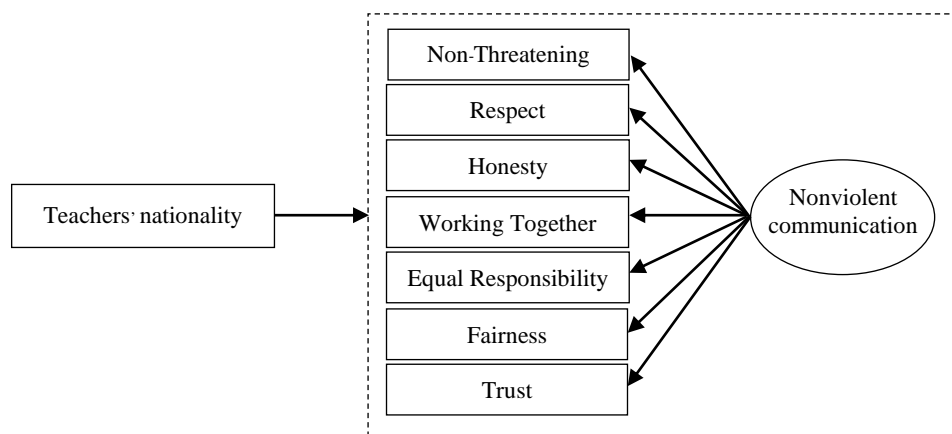


Figure 1 Conceptual framework

3.2 Methods

This study was conducted as descriptive research in order to study the levels of nonviolent communication of Chinese school teachers in Bangkok, Thailand and to compare the levels of nonviolent communication of Chinese school teachers in Bangkok based on teachers' personal background including age, gender, nationality, educational attainment, length of service.

Population and sample

The population of this study is estimated at 1,320 teachers in Chinese schools in Bangkok, Thailand, in the 2018 academic year. According to the descriptive research, Taro Yamane Table (1973) was used for determination of sample size. Sample size would be 316. However, the researcher added up the sample size to 384 respondents (approximately 20%) in order to substitute for the response rate. Thus, the sample size of this study is 384 teachers in Chinese schools.

Sampling procedures

There are 22 Chinese schools in Bangkok, Thailand; eight Chinese schools were chosen to represent 73% of all 22 Chinese schools. Then, unproportioned sampling was employed in order to determine 24 teachers in each school. However, 24 teachers from each school were recruited by using a simple random sampling.

Research instrument

The questionnaire was developed based on Eckstein and Grassa (2005), which nonviolent communication consisted of seven components: non-threatening, respect, honesty, working together, equal responsibility, fairness, and trust. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. The first part of the questionnaire was used to get participants' background information such as gender, age, nationality, educational attainment, teaching experience in the current school. The second part of the questionnaire was used to obtain the nonviolent communication of Chinese school teachers. This part consisted of 21 items which the scale responses were made on a five-point Likert scale, 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (neutral), 4 (agree), and 5 (strongly agree).

Data collection

Data for the nonviolent communication were collected by using a questionnaire. The official letter by the Faculty of Graduate Studies, Mahidol University, Thailand, was sent to eight Chinese schools in Bangkok in order to request permission from the school administrators. After the school administrators accepted, the packed questionnaires with approval letter were sent to the school administrators by the researcher. The data collection was conducted from December 2019 to February 2020.



Data analysis

The data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics (e.g., frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation), and one-way ANOVA analysis.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

1) Demographic characteristics of the samples

Table 1 presented the frequency and percentage of the demographic characteristics of the samples. The samples consisted of 384 Chinese school teachers in Bangkok which comprised mainly of female teachers (75.30%) and male teachers (24.70%). These teachers were mostly aged between 22-39 years old (59.40%). The majority of teachers were Thais (88.00%) where most of them held a Bachelor's degree (83.90%). The results showed that 77.10% of teachers have 1 – 10 years of teaching experience with the current school. Also, the results showed that the average teaching experience in the current school was approximately 8 years.

Table 1 Frequency and percentage of demographic characteristics of the samples

(n = 384)

Demographic characteristics	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1. Gender		
- Male	95	24.70
- Female	289	75.30
Total	384	100.00
2. Age		
- 22 – 39 years old	228	59.40
- 40 – 49 years old	82	21.40
- 50 years old Above	74	19.30
Total	384	100.00
3. Nationality		
- Thai	338	88.00
- Filipino	15	3.90
- Chinese	24	6.30
- Other Nationalities: American, British, Australian, Iranian	7	1.80
Total	384	100.00
4. Educational Attainment		
- Below Bachelor's degree	24	6.30
- Bachelor's degree	322	83.90
- Master's degree	38	9.90
Total	384	100.00
5. Teaching experience in the current school		
(Mean =7.80 years, SD = 8.23 Max = 4.00, Min = 1.00)		
- 1 – 10 years	296	77.10
- 11 – 20 years	51	13.30
- 21 – 30 years	25	6.50
- More than 30 years	12	3.10
Total	384	100.00

2) A study of levels of nonviolent communication of Chinese school teachers in Bangkok, Thailand

Table 2 presented the descriptive statistics of the overall of nonviolent communication of Chinese school teachers in Bangkok, Thailand. The researcher had assigned criteria for understanding the mean score into five levels; *lowest level* represented a mean of 1.00 – 1.81, *low level* represented a mean of



1.81 – 2.60, *moderate level* represented a mean of 2.61 – 3.40, *high level* represented a mean of 3.41 – 4.20, and the *highest level* represented a mean of 4.21 – 5.00.

The findings indicated that the overall of nonviolent communication of Chinese school teachers in Bangkok, Thailand was at the highest level ($M = 4.32$, $SD = 0.47$). Among seven components of nonviolent communication, six components were evaluated at the highest level except one component – trust – were evaluated in the high level. The mean of honesty was the highest of all components ($M = 4.39$, $SD = 0.56$), followed by respect ($M = 4.38$, $SD = 0.59$), working together ($M = 4.36$, $SD = 0.55$), and non-threatening ($M = 4.35$, $SD = 0.52$). At the same time, the mean of trust was the lowest of all components ($M = 4.18$, $SD = 0.62$).

Table 2 Descriptive statistics of the overall of nonviolence communication of Chinese school teachers in Bangkok, Thailand

(n = 384)

Components	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Sk	Ku	CV(%)	Level
1. Non-Threatening	4.35	0.52	2.67	5.00	-0.58	-0.12	11.95	Highest
2. Respect	4.38	0.59	2.33	5.00	-0.84	0.12	13.47	Highest
3. Honesty	4.39	0.56	2.33	5.00	-0.79	0.38	12.76	Highest
4. Working Together	4.36	0.55	2.33	5.00	-0.62	-0.20	12.64	Highest
5. Equal Responsibility	4.26	0.59	2.00	5.00	-0.72	0.13	13.85	Highest
6. Fairness	4.33	0.69	1.67	5.00	-0.74	0.45	15.94	Highest
7. Trust	4.18	0.62	1.00	5.00	-0.69	1.05	14.83	High
Overall	4.32	0.47	2.62	5.00	-0.49	-0.09	10.88	Highest

3) A comparison of the levels of nonviolent communication of Chinese school teachers in Bangkok

Table 3 presented the comparison of the levels of nonviolent communication of Chinese school teachers in Bangkok based on teachers' nationality. As determined by one-way ANOVA, the results revealed that there was a statistically significant difference among nationalities ($F(3, 380) = 6.75$, $p = .00$). Besides, there were statistically significant differences in nonviolent communication of Chinese school teachers between Filipino and Thai ($p = .01$), between other nationalities and Thai ($p = .00$), as well as between other nationalities and Chinese ($p = .00$).

Table 3 A comparison of the levels of nonviolent communication of Chinese school teachers in Bangkok.

(n = 384)

Teachers' nationality	n	Mean	SD	F	p	Multiple comparisons
1. Thai	338	4.29	0.47	6.75	.00**	2 > 1 ($p = .01$)
2. Filipino	15	4.71	0.41			4 > 1 ($p = .00$)
3. Chinese	24	4.34	0.43			4 > 3 ($p = .00$)
4. Other Nationalities: American, British, Australian, Iranian	7	4.82	0.17	Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances: $F = 2.83$, $df1 = 3$, $df2 = 380$, $p = .04$		

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

4.2 Discussion

1) A comparison of the levels of nonviolent communication of Chinese school teachers in Bangkok.

The findings revealed that there was a statistically significant difference among nationalities. Moreover, there were statistically significant differences in nonviolent communication of Chinese school teachers between Filipino and Thai, between other nationalities and Thai, as well as between other nationalities and Chinese. This means the levels of nonviolent communication of other nationalities which comprised of American, British, Australian, and Iranian was the highest of all nationalities. The finding was supported by Qudsyi, Trimulyaningsih, Novitasari, and Stueck (2018), indicated that nonviolent communication was originally developed in Western culture, especially the United States. Baesler and



Lauricella (2014), indicated that there are differences relative to peace in Western countries such as the attempt to create a “Department of Peace” in the US government since the early 1960s, and Canada has also been involved in the majority of peace support operations mandated by the UN Security Council. Peace education is a major focus of concern in the UK (Hicks, 1988, 1991, 2004). Moreover, we can learn from a long history of peace education in the United States of America (Stomfay-Stitz, 2008).

2) Unequally sized groups

For a comparison of the levels of nonviolent communication among nationalities, there are four subgroups; Thai, Filipino, Chinese, and other nationalities (American, British, Australian, Iranian). Due to the proportion of Chinese school teachers in Bangkok, it was found out that the number of teachers in each group was an unequal sized group. This caused the result of a loss of power as equal-sized groups maximize statistical power (Rusticus & Lovato, 2014). It would be interesting to design a sampling design to obtain the number of teachers in each nationality as equal-sized groups to maximize statistical power.

5. Conclusion

5.1 The findings indicated that *the overall of nonviolence communication of Chinese school teachers in Bangkok, Thailand*, was at the highest level. The mean of honesty was the highest of all components, followed by respect, working together, non-threatening, fairness, equal responsibility, and trust.

5.2 The results revealed that there was a statistically significant difference among nationalities ($F(3, 380) = 6.75, p = .00$). However, it was found that there were statistically significant differences in nonviolent communication of Chinese school teachers between Filipino and Thai, between other nationalities and Thai, as well as between other nationalities and Chinese. It should be emphasized on the enhancing nonviolent communication of Chinese school teachers in Bangkok, Thailand, especially Thai teachers. It would be interesting to develop a nonviolent communication training program that fits perfectly for Thai teachers by conducting research and development (R&D) or mixed methods experimental (intervention) design. Moreover, it would be interesting to enhance the nonviolent communication of Thai teachers in Chinese School by employing teacher empowerment technique.

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